

# **BCODP** British Council of Organisations of Disabled People

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There has been a long felt need for national organisations of disabled people to come together and form a co-ordinating body. At the beginning of 1981 representatives from organisations controlled by disabled people met and set up a steering committee aimed at forming a co-ordinating body with its inaugural conference at the end of that year. This was achieved and the British Council of Organisations of Disabled People (BCODP) was established in November 1981. The Council is made up from some long established and new national organisations controlled by disabled people, and it is hoped that all organisations of disabled people will join.

The forming of the BCODP has been welcomed by disabled people who see this as an important step forward to achieving our full integration into society. In parliament Jack Ashley MP said "...the real achievement of the year (IYDP) is that disabled people have now decided to act for themselves and to fight for themselves. They have formed the British Council of Organisations of Disabled People." Hugh Rossi, Minister of State for Social Security and the Disabled said "I welcome the formation of the British Council. One of the aims of IYDP was participation and I hope that this is a step towards that."

## Purpose

The purpose of the BCODP is to provide a forum for the free exchange of information, ideas and views with the object of developing and expressing our needs in order to carry out particular projects.

## Aim

At the first Council meeting in December 1981 the BCODP agreed to draw up national action plans to tackle specific social barriers to our integration into the community:-

Standing committees will be assessing and campaigning for

- a) our housing needs and drawing up plans which will achieve our full integration
- b) our educational needs, which will reduce by half the number of children attending special schools, over the next decade.
- c) the growth of centres of independent living

We shall also be looking towards the creation of a central headquarters which can accommodate offices for the organisations involved in the BCODP and will produce a regular publication of the Council. The action plans being prepared by the standing committees will highlight the need for disabled people to participate in decision making, service delivery and professional training.

The BCODP aims to become a strategic central channel for official representation of disabled people into the decision making bodies of society.

### Current Involvement

In 1981 a world wide body was established and 400 delegates attended the inaugural conference in Singapore of the Disabled Peoples International (DPI). The DPI is made up of national assemblies, regional assemblies and a world council which will represent disabled people at an international level. The DPI is currently seeking consultative status with the United Nations.

The BCODEP is a member of DPI and is the official United Kingdom representative body. One of the BCODEP representatives was elected to the World Council of the DPI.

### Membership

Membership to the BCODEP is open to national organisations controlled by disabled people. There will shortly be a category of affiliation for local and regional groups. The BCODEP will be seeking charitable status.

### Members

Members as at November 1982

Association of Blind and Partially Sighted Teachers and Students

Association of Disabled Professionals

Disabled Drivers Association

Disablement Income Group

Gemma

National Federation of the Blind

Possum Users Association

Spinal Injuries Association

Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation

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